





STATE OF THE UNION.

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SPEECH OF HON. OWEN LOVEJOY,  
OF ILLINOIS.

*Delivered in the House of Representatives, January 23, 1861.*

The House having under consideration the report from the select committee of thirty-three—

Mr. LOVEJOY said:

Mr. SPEAKER: I acknowledge the appropriateness and am impressed with the truth of the remark made a day or two since by the gentleman from Virginia, [Mr. MILLSON,] when he said he was embarrassed by the solemnity of uttering words under circumstances like those in which the country now finds itself. I, sir, feel that embarrassment, and I pray for that "wisdom which is from above, which is first pure and then peaceable," to direct my thoughts into right channels, and to enable me to clothe those thoughts in such language as befits the occasion and this presence—I might say, sir, without any empty compliment, this august presence; for placed as we are, with the question before us whether the glorious fabric of our Government shall be dissolved, every Representative before me is multiplied into the thousands whom he represents, till I seem to stand in the awful and august presence of thirty-two million people.

Sir, the present aspect of public affairs not only naturally suggests, but compels us to the consideration and discussion of the primary principles of our Government—a frequent recurrence to which (I think it is Jefferson who has declared) is essential to the preservation and perpetuation of public liberty. What, then, Mr. Speaker, is our theory of government? It is with admirable and philosophical precision, though with extreme brevity, set forth in the declaration which our fathers made when they resorted to an appeal to arms and to the God of battles to settle the controversy which then existed between the colonies and the mother country. After laying down axiomatic principles in reference to the natural rights of man, the author of that declaration proceeds to say, that to protect these natural rights, (previously enumerated,) governments are instituted among men, deriving all their just powers from the consent of the governed, and that when a Government becomes subversive of those rights, it is the privilege and the duty of the people to alter, amend, or abolish such Government, and to reconstruct it on such principles as seem to them best adapted to promote the great purposes for which Governments are instituted—to wit, to protect the natural rights of man.

Mr. Speaker, I have heard at the other end of the Capitol, and also in this Hall, an allusion made to this subject; and as I believe there is an error very generally obtaining in regard to the purposes of government, I wish here to state what I believe is substantially true, that men entering the social or governmental state, do not surrender a portion of their rights for the purpose of securing protection to those which remain. That is not our theory of government. Our theory is this; that men enter into the social or political state to secure protection for those rights, and all of those rights, unabated, undiminished, with which God, the Creator, has clothed them.

Now we come to the consideration of the question: who made this Government? By what power does it exist? Who poured into it the tide of vitality, which gave it energy and life and power? Who? Shall I answer it in accordance with the miserable dogma of secession, under the protection of which it is now sought to subvert and destroy the government? Is it "we, the States," enter into a compact? Is it "we, the States," form a league? Is that the language? No, sir. "We, the people of the United States," for purposes enumerated, do establish and ordain the following Constitution. It is the wildest dogma of secession and treason and rebellion, by which these criminals against God and man seek to shelter themselves, that this Government is a mere rope of sand, a league, a compact, a partnership, to be dissolved at the will of any one single member of the firm. It is, "we, the people," not "we, the people of the State of South Carolina," not "we, the people of New York, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania;" but, "we, the people of the United States," one, indivisible, in our original sovereign power—subject to no one this side of the Throne of Omnipotence—we ordain and establish the following Constitution.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I do not deny—I concede readily, fully, that the people of South Carolina and the people of Georgia, a communication from whose recent Representatives we have just listened to—I concede that they have a right to alter, amend, or abolish their own State governments. They may protect slavery or abolish slavery. They may abolish all laws against murder and polygamy if they please, or they may

punish these crimes by imprisonment or by hanging. They may establish a form of religion if they choose. They may declare by law that no citizen shall be eligible to office who does not belong to the established Church around which they have thrown their legal sanction. All this they can do. But, Mr. Speaker, there is one thing which the people of South Carolina cannot do: they cannot abolish the Government of the United States. They cannot dissolve this Union, for the very reason that they did not make it. They were a part of it, I grant you; they were a part of the "people of the United States;" and the citizens of a school district and of a county are a part of the people of a State; but can they meet together in school districts or town halls and abolish the State Government, by having somebody to go through the derisive mockery of absolving them from their allegiance to the laws of the State, simply because they are a part of the people who helped to make the State Government? Nobody believes that. No more can the people of South Carolina or of Georgia abolish the United States Government, or absolve their citizens from their oath of fealty and from the obligation of obedience which every one of them owes to that Government. And I insist that every citizen of those States who abjures the Constitution, who refuses to recognize its obligations and to obey it, stands perjured before God and the civilized world.

Mr. Speaker, I now come to this question of coercion. I desire that what I have stated in regard to allegiance shall be kept in mind. It is folly, Jesuitical wickedness for a State to suppose that it can absolve its individual citizens from their oath of fealty to the Government of the United States. The citizens of South Carolina owe a certain fealty to the State; but their ultimate and highest fealty is due to the sovereign to which baron and liegman are bound alike to bend the knee. That sovereignty is one and indivisible; and within its chartered limits ultimate and absolute; and no State has a right to absolve its citizens from their obligation.

I do not hold that the Government of the United States has any power to punish citizens of South Carolina, or Georgia, as citizens of those States; but I insist that it has very much to do with them as American citizens, living in Georgia and South Carolina, and we mean to enforce upon them their obligation to the Constitution, obedience to the laws; for the law of the United States is supreme, as the Constitution is, over the citizens of the United States, whether living in Georgia or Massachusetts.

As to this coercion, sir, it is a forcible illustration of the fable of the wolf and the lamb. This cry of coercion is simply a pretext under color of which the citizens of Georgia and of South Carolina come and steal our property without even the poor excuse of having made a formal declaration of war. The title to this property vests in the government of the United States as really, as sacredly, as the title to private property can vest in an individual. The title-deeds are in the archives of the Government. They are recorded. We own the land on which these forts stand. We built the forts. We paid for them; and they are ours. These citizens of the United States living in South Carolina and Georgia, fancying themselves absolved from their oath of allegiance by this Jesuitical process of State convention and State action, come and take possession of our forts, seize our guns, take our munitions of war; and when we propose to go and take them back, they cry "Coercion! coercion!" They say we are going to coerce a sovereign State of this Union; going to invade their homes, violate the sanctities of the domestic circle; and then declare—and it sounds very formidable—that they will pour out their blood, every drop of it—intrench themselves behind every blade of grass and defend their wives and daughters and firesides to the very last extremity, rather than be coerced. That is, rather than let those robbers, and pirates, and traitors be taken and hung. That is the simple English of it. Coercion is simply this: When a man who has committed a crime and takes refuge in a private house, and the officers of justice come to arrest him, it will not do for the inmates of that household to interpose the sanctities of home between the law and its victim. "But what if the whole family sympathize with and justify the offender?" Then I would burn the house and hang every rebel, though a traitor dangled from every tree of an unbroken forest.

And so I say with regard to the State of South Carolina, which interposed itself between the Federal Government and the constitutional administration and execution of the Federal laws. It cannot avail itself of this cry of coercion. If they thrust themselves between the United States and the execution of its laws, and bid us defiance, and say we shall not enforce obedience to the constitutional enactments of the Federal Government, then I say that the mighty wheels of this huge Government must roll over any man, or number of men, who stand between this Government and the arrest of those who have violated its laws.

¶ Sir, on the 7th day of January, 1861, is a day long to be remembered in the annals



of the American people. On that day a steamboat, called the *Star of the West*, was gliding over the waters of the Atlantic into one of the ports of the United States. A cannon-ball came hissing and skinning across its prow; the stars and stripes sprang out to the breeze—as if startled by an event so unusual—to tell the persons, whoever they might be, that fired that shot, that the vessel aimed at was under the protection of the stars and stripes. In a moment, another ball came hissing and plunging into its sides—another, and another—and that flag, for the first time since its folds were unfurled to the breeze, turned and flapped ingloriously by the sides of the mast, and the vessel that bore it returned to the place of its departure. Never before, on the American continent, was that flag insulted. The almanacs that our children will read among the memorabilia of 1861, opposite the 7th day of January, 1861, will have written, “The American flag, for the first time, fired upon by American citizens.” I do not know how others may feel, but I confess I cannot keep it out of my mind—these balls booming, hissing, disgracing, and defying the flag of the United States, burn and sting to the very quick continually.

Mr. Speaker, it is under these circumstances, with the flag of our country disgraced and insulted—never before disgraced or insulted—that we meet here to-day; and it is proposed to compromise, to concede, to conciliate. Compromise with whom? With traitors who have fired on our flag! Conciliate whom? Rebels who have bid your Government defiance! Sir, whatever I might yield under other circumstances, whatever arrangement I might make whatever compromises I might give my vote to support, never as God lives, will I vote for one particle of compromise until that insult is atoned, apologized for, or avenged: never.

And what are the compromises suggested? In the first place, however, who are the high contracting parties to this proposed peace arrangement, and settlement of this whole question? The South and the North—slavery and freedom. Now, Mr. Speaker, it does seem to me that our experience in making compromises and settling difficulties in that mode does not afford any great encouragement to enter into any new arrangement of that nature for similar purposes; and I wish to state distinctly that, for one, I want to see this farce, comedy, or tragedy, which ever it may be, of disunion, played out to the very last act. I want to know just what it is, and all that it is. The first act has been played a good many times, but we have never yet come to the fifth. We began it in 1820, when southern gentlemen rose in this Hall, left the floor, and declared they would dissolve the Union if they could not get in Missouri as a slave State. And they played a comedy again in 1832, which, if General Jackson had had his way, would have been a tragedy; then they played another in 1840, and again in 1850. Now I say that, without compromise, without conciliation, without concession, let us understand what this disunion means; and let us know in future whether South Carolina or Mississippi, or any other State, can peril the prosperity, send a thrill of mental anguish all over this country, and bring upon thousands perunary ruin, just by saying, “We will dissolve the Union if you will not do so and so.” It is not consistent with the honor and safety of the national Government to adopt any measures whatever for the redress of any wrong, real or imaginary, until the threat of disunion and rebellion is removed. I want to know that before I will yield any terms of compromise, concession, or conciliation. Until then my vote will be a calm, firm, decided negative. There are no wrongs to redress; and if there were, I would do nothing for their removal until this game of secession has been played out.

But where are the compromises proposed? First, the Breckinridge platform is to be incorporated into the Constitution; and I am to swear, when I take the oath to support the Constitution, that I will protect slavery in the Territories, and allow it unlimited expansion and perpetuity. The very proposition is an outrage to the Christian civilization of the age.

What next? Before commenting, sir, on the propositions distinctly recommended by the committee of thirty-three, I desire to allude to some remarks of the chairman, made on Monday last, when submitting their report.

That gentleman informed us that thirty years ago his career in this House began with a compromise; and he seems not unwilling that it should close in a similar manner. As the men of that period sowed the seed of future compromise, so he—unwittingly, I presume—scatters the seminal germ of a future harvest. In less than thirty years, should we now yield to the clamor of the slaveholding interest, menacing disunion, we shall have a demand for a constitutional amendment, prohibiting the publication of anything from the press, or the utterance of anything from the lips, “intended” to excite servile insurrection. I know that the gentleman placed a good deal of emphasis on the word “intent!” Why, sir, who has any such intent? And could they carry

out such an intention? Do the slaves take papers, or listen to sermons, or hear lectures printed or uttered in the free States? Is it not forbidden in most of, if not in all, the slaveholding States, to teach a slave to read even the oracles of God? Sir, this innuendo is aimed, if it has any meaning of purpose at all, at the anti-slavery literature of the free States, to the suppression of free speech, and the putting down of fanatical men like Lovejoy. [Laughter.] Criminal intent is inferred from the natural tendency of the act, and will be apparent to compromisers frightened at the cry of disunion. And we shall have United States commissioners as censors of the press, as we now have to aid in the capture of fugitive slaves.

Mr. DUNN. I wish to say to the gentleman from Illinois that there is nothing in the report of the committee of thirty-three which can be construed into any proposed interference with the freedom of speech or of the press.

Mr. LOVEJOY. I did not mean to say that anything of this kind was in the report of the committee. I referred to the remarks of the gentleman from Ohio, [Mr. CORWIN,] and am predicting the future aggressions of the slave power if we yield to its demands now. And the disguised assault of the chairman on the anti-slavery, or even abolition press, seems to suggest and invite such aggressions. I cannot forbear, sir, turning aside a moment from the report proper, to utter my feeble voice of protest and reprobation against a suggestion even remotely looking in this direction.

I now come to the proposition as to New Mexico. What is said in defence of this? That it is not much of a compromise. The South tells us that if we subjugate them, we shall have to fight for it. But we, more amiable, subjugate ourselves, and like the servile ox, bow our necks and put on the collars they proffer, with the initials "C. C.," (compromise collar,) and bless God and "Massa" that it is no larger. We reach out our wrists for handcuffs, and console ourselves by saying, "It is not as bad as it might be; we can move our fingers a little." We voluntarily place our foot on the anvil to have the smith rivet our fetters, and chuckle over the fact that it is a trace, and not a log-chain. And, passing from the august presence of our subjugators, with collar, cuff, and chain, we rattle a *te Deum* that the collar is so narrow, the cuff so light, and the chain so small.

Sir, the whole history of these compromises should teach us that this slave power will leap over all barriers in its clamorous and insatiable demands. When anything is wanted to sustain, defend, or perpetuate its dominion, or which threatens its supremacy, nothing is necessary except to raise the cry of disunion, secession. Compromise, or we will dissolve the Union; and there will be found a Judas to betray, a Peter to deny, and a hired soldiery to drive the nails, and the form of freedom is fastened, bleeding and quivering, to the accursed wood of compromise. I will none of it. I demand to know—without compromise, without conciliation, and without concession—I demand to know whether I have a country; whether I have a Government; or whether thirty-two million people are to be turned out homeless and orphans upon the world, floating like waifs upon the ocean, without any government, and without any protection, unless they hold it at the mercy of some single State of this Union, or worse still, at the nod of the slave power.

We were reminded, sir, of an ancestral name by the speech of the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. CLEMENS] yesterday—a very excellent speech, by the way. It was intimated in that speech that it would be worthy of a certain gentleman on this floor to lead off in this compromise. I would be glad—if it be not improper, and I know it is not, for nothing that I say is prompted by any other feelings than those of kindness, respect, and esteem—I would be glad to say that there was an old revolutionary hero who declared: "Live or die, sink or swim, survive or perish, I am for this resolution." Sir, it was in this spirit that the nation was born, and it is in this spirit that it must be born again, or saved, and not by your temporizing policy, not by concessions, not by conciliation. Gentlemen of the North, of the South, and of the whole Union, it is your interest, as it is mine, to know whether you have a Government that has any stability or not.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say a word to my Republican brethren. [Laughter.] Gentlemen, Representatives, you are asked to desert the party and the principles which you were proud to uphold before the people, and when you entered this House at the opening of the session; and the question is, shall we abandon the cardinal article of our faith—prohibition of slavery in the Territories of the United States, and the Federal Government released from its dictation and control? Perhaps this drift towards a compromise foreshadows a purpose to organize a new party, "sloughing off, as the phrase is, the extremes, both North and South. In this new arrangement all the radicals like myself are to be left out. I wish you a merry time of it, my masters. A very interesting play, Hamlet with Hamlet left out! There never was a party that had such



a golden opportunity since the organization of the Government, as we had at the beginning of the session. What we needed was unity, firmness, decision. If we had stood still, we should ere this have seen the salvation of God. We ought to have imitated Rarey, as he stands in the center of the inclosure with an untamed and infuriated horse, sweeping around in still narrowing circles; anon, with ears laid back, nostrils distended, and open mouth, he rushes toward that immovable man; the spectators tremble, and a wave of fearful anxiety sweeps over the multitude; but the horse-tamer, without the twinge of a muscle, keeps his eye fixed on that of the infuriated animal; and the latter, though he comes close to his master, does not touch him, but turns again to dart around the inclosure, again to rush toward his master, but not to touch him; and this process is repeated till this noble animal comes and bows his neck to the hand of his subduer, overcome by the magic power of calmness, self-possession, and a firm will.

So with this disunion Mazeppa. It was very furious, and covered itself with foam, and threatened to devour us. Its very fury and precipitancy proved its conscious weakness and fear. If we had been cool, calm, self-possessed, doing nothing to conciliate on the one hand, and nothing to irritate on the other, we should have had, ere now, a strap around the leg of this disunion courser. But no; like the old Whigs, having achieved a victory, we were affrighted at our own success, even as the witch of Endor fell aghast before the venerable form she had conjured up. We appointed a committee of compromise—a grave mistake for us, a carnival for the Democracy, affording them a possible opportunity of reconstructing what was, but for our folly, an irrecoverably lost party. If we had only known in that our day the things which belonged to our peace. [Laughter.] Solomon says, "In vain is the snare set in the sight of any bird;" but I doubt, though his researches seem to have been extensive, if he ever fell in with that species of the feathered tribe described by modern naturalists as the gull.

But the premier, as he is called, is for a compromise, I am told. I do not know, and will not believe that, until I am obliged to; although I confess, instead of philosophical and polished essays, sailing like a beautiful barge, around Point-no-point, I wish the Cicero of the American Senate had turned his eye on the Catiline of Georgia, and said, in the abrupt and vehement invective of the Roman consul, "*Quousque tandem abutere Catilina, patientia nostra!*"

It is said that our President elect is for compromise. This I do not, cannot, and never will believe, until I have it from his own lips or his own acts. I know he has too much regard for the common appellation by which he is familiarly known, of "Honest Old Abe," ever to believe that he will betray the principles of the Republican party, which were made distinctly and squarely in the last campaign, of inflexible, unalterable opposition to the extension of human slavery. But, sir, even if it were true that the President elect and future Cabinet advise compromise, I will not follow their lead one step. If they or an angel from Heaven preach any other Republican gospel than that which was proclaimed at Chicago, let them be *anathema maranatha*—accursed till the people come to curse them. For all the batons of earth, and all the diadems of Heaven, I would not, in their place, betray or disappoint the hopes of the people whose confidence and suffrages have placed them in power.

Under the leadership of no man or angel, by the entreaties of no friends, by the threats of no enemies, by no hope of reward or fear of proscription, will I ever yield the millionth part of a hair more guarantee to this slave power, at any time; and were it otherwise, I would not until we settle the question whether we have a Government or not. The spider's most attenuated thread is cord, is cable, to that gossamer line that I will yield in the way of compromise or concession to the claims of slavery. [Laughter.] I wanted to say a good many kind things in this speech. [Laughter.]

Mr. JOHN COCHRANE. I move that the gentleman's time be extended.

Mr. WINSLOW. I object.

Mr. LOVEJOY. I must pass over some things. I was paying my regards to the Republican party. I repeat, that we made the issue squarely, distinctly, without hypocrisy or disguise, before the people, and they decided that a President should be elected who was opposed to the extension of human slavery. They elected him in a constitutional mode; and all that we ask is, that he shall be inaugurated. And let me tell you, gentlemen, who are friends of compromise, who want these differences settled, let me tell you that one twelve months of the administration of Abraham Lincoln will do more to disabuse the public mind than all the compromises and peace measures that can be patched up in Congress. Let him have a trial, a fair trial. We will abate not one jot of our principle, or add anything to our creed.

I think I know something of the anti-slavery feeling of the people. It is earnest religious, ineradicable; it may be deceived, but cannot be annihilated; it will spring up from discomfiture with irrepressible elasticity and strength; it is law-abiding and loyal to the Constitution; but it has resolved that this Government shall not be administered under the control of the slave-holding power. If disappointed as to the ultimate results of the recent election, God has raised up the man who will lead it to substantial success. His home overlooks the river called Beautiful. One who, to the sagacity of New York, and the honesty of Illinois, adds the firmness of Jackson, the statesmanship of Pitt, the religious sentiment of Wilberforce, and the administrative ability of William of Orange. The people, by their suffrages, will bear him to the Executive chair, when freedom's hopes will not be disappointed, nor her purposes thwarted by the timidity of the fearful nor the treachery of the corrupt.

Sir, it is said that this Republican party is in favor of the abolition of slavery in the States. The republican party are in favor of no such thing. "Well, but Lovejoy is," as I have heard it whispered around here. I merely wish to repeat—and I am willing to do so for the thousandth time, if it is necessary to disabuse the public mind—that I am not in favor of abolishing slavery in the States where it exists by any act of Congress. I never held to that doctrine, and never advocated it. If a bill were brought in here for that purpose to-day, I would not vote for it; because I do not think that the Constitution gives us the power to abolish it; and not because I do not wish to see it abolished, for God knows that I do. I want to see despotism abolished everywhere. I want to see slavery abolished in South Carolina; but it does not follow, therefore, that I would vote to have the Army and Navy go down there and abolish it. I want to see it abolished in the slave States; and if I were a native of Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, or any of the slave States, I would vote to abolish it. Washington has said as much; and I hope there is nothing criminal in my now saying it.

But the Republican party do not believe, there is not a man who voted for Lincoln who believes, that we have the constitutional power to abolish slavery in the States where it now exists; and I do not suppose there is one who desires that that power should be exercised unconstitutionally, as we hold it is. I am willing, if it will not be thought tedious, to go over this question of equality which my Democratic friends in Illinois and I have gone over so often. "You are in favor of negro equality." No, we are not; not in the sense which you mean. I believe this: that all men are created equal, and that every human being has an equal title to life, liberty, and the fruits of an honest toil. That I do believe. But we do not hold that they are socially equal, or that they are necessarily politically equal, or intellectually equal. We claim that the poorest and the lowest human being who bears God's image, and was redeemed by the blood of Christ, has a right to liberty, life, and the fruits of his labor. This we do believe; at least I do. The chairman of the committee, the other day, speaking of the distinction which was insisted on between *persons* and *property*, said mirthfully that we might, if we choose, call it divinity or theology. This, though not so intended, I know, seemed to be in mockery of four million human beings that were lying prostrate around him, crushed, bleeding, and hopeless. There is one glorious being who never derides the sufferings of the poor and lowly. On His thigh and on His vesture is written the blessed and only Potentate, King of Kings and Lord of Lords. This exalted personage humbled Himself and came down, till He nestled beside the lowest form, the most degraded type of humanity, and whispered in accents of divine love, "my brother." We might as well mock at the bloody agony of Christ, as to jeer at the miseries of the poor slave.

The Union men of the border States, it is said, want something to stand upon. I am willing to disabuse the minds of the people of the southern States; and more than that, I am willing to go and canvass those States, if you will guaranty my personal safety. [Laughter.] This remark excites a smile, but I insist upon it, Mr. Speaker, that had I been permitted to go into either of those States, Maryland, Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, and especially Kentucky—for I have many constituents from that State who came to me after hearing me speak during the last campaign, with a warm greeting of hand and tongue, saying they were as strong and as ultra Abolitionists as myself—I would have given them all the vantage ground they desired. If the Union men of the slave States want something to stand upon, I will give them the Constitution of the United States. It seems to me, if I were known there, or had the advantage of being a native-born citizen of one of those States, I could take those stars and stripes, and waving them before the multitude, tell them it was the flag that Washington followed; the flag which led on the soldiers of the Revolution, while tracking their pathway in blood; that it was the flag which floated over Yorktown and Saratoga; the flag beneath



which Sumter and Marion fought; the flag that was bathed in a flood of glory on the lakes, and guided the hero of the Hermitage in 1812 and 1815; and still later, coming to that gorge of the mountain at Buena Vista, where armed foes poured down in almost countless hosts; I would tell them that northern soldiers and southern soldiers, side by side, followed that flag and snatched victory from the very jaws of defeat. I know I could turn back this insane mania of disunion.

Mr. HINDMAN. Will the gentleman allow me a question?

Mr. LOVEJOY. Certainly.

Mr. HINDMAN. Would the gentleman, at the same time, tell those people, that while they and his fellow-citizens won those territories by the joint expenditure of blood and treasure, he and his party would not permit them to remove with their slave property into the domain of the United States so acquired?

Mr. LOVEJOY. Certainly I would. I might thank the gentleman for that question. Yes, sir, I would say to the citizens of the slave States that I believe in the equality of the States; that I believe in the equality of the citizens of the States; that I believe that the citizens of South Carolina, of Tennessee, and of Arkansas, have the same right to go into the Territories as the citizens of New York, Pennsylvania, or Massachusetts. I would say that neither one of them could carry their slaves there; and, therefore, they are still upon an equality. They can go there without slaves and we can go there without slaves, and we are upon a perfect equality in regard to that matter. But, let me say that the Territories are for your free non-slaveholding population, who want them free States, as we do. Southern Illinois was settled by that class of people. Southern Indiana was settled by that class of people. If I recollect aright, only about two million are interested in slave property, while the other six million, and all the millions of the free States, are interested in having free States.

Besides that, I want to ask the gentleman another question. Would he like to carry anything into the Territories that would keep the citizens of the free States from going there? If slavery goes into the Territories, the citizens of the free States will not go there.

Mr. HINDMAN. The ancestors of the gentlemen, I believe, lived under the jurisdiction of States which recognized the institution of slavery; and I am not aware that any of them emigrated because of the existence of slavery in any of the thirteen States.

But the gentleman says he desires to know whether I wish to take into the Territories any property or institution which would exclude northern men from going there. I desire to take into the Territories of the Union the property recognized by the constitution of my State. I feel that I am entitled to go with it there, with my fellow-citizens; and I am not content to yield up that right, under any circumstances whatever, in reference to any portion of the Territories of this Government. If northern men will allow that to prevent them from emigrating there, it is an indulgence upon their part, and an idle phantasm, in behalf of which I am bound to sacrifice my rights.

Mr. LOVEJOY. I need not go into a discussion of that point. I might argue it from the single stand point of property. It certainly is not competent for a State to enact any laws in regard to property which are going to operate and be enforced in any territory outside of that State where the laws are enacted. If a man is prohibited, as he is in Indian territory, from taking there many things which are recognized as property in New York, he still might go there, but he could not expect to carry with him the local laws of the State from which he went. A State might abolish all laws against a plurality of wives. Could a citizen of such a State take a harem to the Territories?

Mr. HINDMAN. Will the gentleman allow me a moment?

Mr. LOVEJOY. I have but little time. Shall I have an extension?

Mr. WINSLOW. I object.

Mr. LOVEJOY. I hope the gentleman will not take up my time.

Mr. HINDMAN. I acknowledge that I have consumed a portion of the gentleman's time, and I trust the House will allow him as much time as I have consumed.

Mr. LOVEJOY. But I must pass on from this point. I desire to get it distinctly before the House, if I can, that whether compromises are, in the nature of things, desirable and necessary or not, still, at the present time, it is wholly improper and utterly perilous to the country, to enter into any compromises whatever. Every nation has some nucleus thought, some central idea, which they enshrine, and around which they cluster and fasten. The old Roman citizen had his Capitol and his Pantheon; France has her Napoleon and military glory, England has her constitutional monarchy; and the old Jews had their temple and shekinah. The American people, sir, have this one central idea of thought, embalmed and enshrined as a nucleus thought, around which they all cluster, and to which they all adhere with a superstitious idolatry—the Union, the Constitution, the flag of their country—are a sort of trinity, to which the American people pay political homage and worship

And now, I insist, in this time of peril, of agitation, and rebellion, it is no time to tamper with that holy instrument around which all American hearts cluster, and to which they cling with the tenacity of a semi-religious attachment. Do this, and by and by Pennsylvania, if she cannot have protection for her coal and iron, which is her negro, will dissolve the Union. If New York is denied her free trade, she will encircle the brow of her mayor with the diadem and place the scepter in his hand. If Massachusetts fails to obtain her fishing bounties, she will secede. If Maine cannot have protection to her lumber and fishing interests, she will dissolve the Union. Michigan, I believe, wants the St. Clair flats cleared; and if you do not comply with her wishes in this regard, she will throw herself upon her sovereignty, dissolve the Union, and shed so much blood that the ensanguined tide shall pour over Niagara's rocks, and the fishermen at the mouth of the St. Lawrence will be startled with the reddened ripple around the prow of their boats, as was the mariner on the Mediterranean when the waters of Egypt were turned into blood. Illinois wants protection for her beef; or, what is more likely, she will not consent to pay tribute to Pennsylvania every time she shoes a horse or sharpens a plow. Oregon demands the payment of her war debt, or she will throw off her allegiance. California demands the building of a Pacific railroad, or she will erect a Pacific republic. And so, sir, this grand fabric of our Government, baptized in our father's blood, and handed down to us to be in turn bequeathed to our children, is at the beck and mercy of any State that is disaffected or displeased in regard to some Federal legislation, or, more preposterous still, in reference to some State enactments. We are like sea-weed, waifs on the ocean, without anchorage, with no common rallying point around which to cluster, where our hearts can center, and where we can say: "In life or death, in weal or woe, sunshine or storm, we are for the flag of our country, our Constitution, and our Union." In this the hour of our peril, whatever may be our dissensions, it is unpatriotic and unstatesmanlike to place all the glories of the past, all the immense and varied interests of the present, and all the glorious hopes of the future, at the mercy and caprice of any one State in this Union. I think it is the highest statesmanship now, here, in this very year of our Lord 1861, to settle this question, without compromise, without concession, without conciliation, have we a Government that is permanent and fixed, and that will protect and shelter us?

Mr. Speaker, Bonaparte said, while standing on the sands of Egypt, near the Pyramids, "forty centuries are looking down upon us." Representatives, more than forty centuries are looking down upon us. The past, the present, the future—thirty million, forty million, fifty million, rising up to one hundred million, who are to come and live and pass away upon American soil—all these are looking upon us; and standing in the presence of that cloud of witnesses, and speaking for them all, I say, "Maintain your Government pure and simple, without compromise, and establish the fact that it is permanent, stable, potent—a Government that must be obeyed at home, that thus it may be respected abroad."

Mr. Speaker, the American Congress has a higher and nobler mission than to be engaged in the sacrilegious work of sacrificing the rights of freedom to the interests of slavery. Slavery is temporary; slavery is local; by the action of the slave States it will pass away, as it has passed away in New York and Pennsylvania. It is proposed that we shall declare, by a constitutional amendment, that we will never touch slavery in the States; and you have heard what I have to say about that. But suppose that Maryland, or Virginia, or Kentucky, or Tennessee, want to touch it; suppose they want us to pay them something, and they will emancipate their slaves: by this proposed amendment you bind the Federal Government, and tie the hands of the States, and say that they shall not do anything of the sort, unless every single slave State consents to it. Virginia, Maryland, Kentucky, and Tennessee, are all to be placed in the power of the Gulf States, who want to perpetuate this practice forever. It will not do gentlemen. The interests now trembling on your decision are too momentous, too valuable, too far-reaching, for us to tamper or trifle with them, or to alter or amend in one single iota that great charter of American liberty, the Constitution of the United States.

Sir, it is a crime to make shipwreck of this Government. Let the American people who made this Government preserve it consecrated to freedom. Let the great principles which underlie it travel in the greatness of their strength and the fullness of their beneficence round the globe; and when the earth is encircled with an ocean of republics fashioned after our own, and freedom's temple is complete, and the topstone is brought in with shoutings of "freedom and glory unto it," high, in letters of light, on the living stones of which that temple is built, shall be written: THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC—*The American Constitution*, as having taught the people of the earth that man's inalienable birthright was FREEDOM.





